

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MANILA 13470 021154Z

41

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 L-03

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /080 W

----- 084058

R 020909Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9782

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 13470

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EALR, EFIN, EAB, SA, RP

SUBJECT: PHILIPPINE OVERSEAS WORKERS WELFARE FUND

REF: DHAHRAN 1008

BEGIN SUMARY: GOP DEPARTMENT OF LABOR HAS SET UP AN OVER-SEAS WORKERS WELFARE FUND TO SERVICE THE NON-JOB RELATED PROBLEMS OF OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS, FUNDING IS A PROBLEM THE GOP SEEKS TO ASSIGN TO THE CONTRACTORS WHO ARE RECRUITING. END SUMMARY.

1. LABOR SECRETARY BLAS OPLE TOLD LABATT AUG 27 THAT A DRAFT PRESIDENTIAL DECREE CONCERNING OVERSEAS WORKERS' WELFARE WAS AWAITING THE PRESIDENT'S SIGNATURE. THE DECREE WOULD FORMALIZE AN EXISTING PRACTICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR'S (DOL) OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT BOARD (OEDB) WHEREBY FOREIGN CONTRACTORS SEEKING TO RECRUIT PHILIPPINE WORKERS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MANILA 13470 021154Z

ARE ASKED TO CONTRIBUTE TO AN OVERSEAS WORKERS' WELFARE

FUND ADMINISTERED BY OEDB.

2. AT THE PRESENT TIME OEDB OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN TRYING TO PERSUADE AMERICAN CONTRACTORS, WHO HAVE COME TO MANILA TO RECRUIT WORKERS FOR SAUDI ARABIA, TO ALLOW THE OEDB TO PURCHASE THE AIRLINE TICKET FOR EACH FILIPINO WORKER AND THUS, PERMIT THE OEDB TO GET A SLICE OF THE SO-CALLED "OVERRIDE COMMISSION." PHILIPPINE AIR LINES (PAL) CURRENTLY CONTRIBUTES 1/3 OF THE "OVERRIDE COMMISSION" ON THE PRICE OF A TICKET TO THE FUND WHEN OEDB BUYS THE TICKET.

3. OPLE CLAIMS THAT THIS FUND IS NECESSARY IN ORDER FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR TO EMPLOY SOCIAL WORKERS TO SEND TO THE HOST COUNTRY THAT EMPLOYS LARGE NUMBERS OF FILIPINOS. "THE KOREANS ARE WAY AHEAD OF US IN THIS AREA OF ACTIVITY," OPLE SAID. USING GERMANY AS AN EXAMPLE, HE SAID WE HAVE 7,000 FILIPINO NURSES THERE AND THE KOREANS HAVE 14,000. WE HAVE 2 SOCIAL WORKERS AND THE KOREANS HAVE ABOUT 14. OPLE CLAIMS THAT BY PROVIDING FILIPINO SOCIAL WORKERS, WHO WOULD LOOK AFTER THE NON-JOB RELATED PROBLEMS OF OVERSEAS WORKERS, THE TENSIONS AND CULTURAL SHOCK THAT AFFECT FILIPINOS WILL BE GREATLY RELIEVED, TO THE BENEFIT OF THE WORKER AND THE CONTRACTOR.

4. SO FAR AT LEAST THREE AMERICAN CONTRACTORS HAVE REFUSED TO CONSIDER ANY CONTRIBUTION TO THE FUND, CLAIMING THE PORTION OF THE OVERRIDE COMMISSION THEY RECEIVE IS NOT NEGOTIABLE. WE UNDERSTAND THE OVERRIDE COMMISSION, WHICH IS A A VERY FLEXIBLE FIGURE, CAN AMOUNT TO AS MUCH AS 50 PERCENT OF THE LIST PRICE OF REGULAR AIRLINE TICKET IF NON-SCHEDULED CHARTER FLIGHTS ARE USED. AN AMERICAN CONTRACTOR IS IN MANILA NOW SEEKING TO RECRUIT 400 CONSTRUCTION WORKERS FOR SAUDI ARABIA. THIS CONTRACTOR ESTIMATES THAT OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS, THERE WILL BE JOBS FOR ABOUT 300,000 FOREIGN WORKERS IN SAUDI ARABIA ALONE.

5. AS A RELATED ACTIVITY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR IS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MANILA 13470 021154Z

TRYING TO PERSUADE FILIPINO CONTRACTORS TO GET INVOLVED IN THE BIDDING FOR MIDDLE EAST CONTRACTS. OPLE CLAIMED THAT AG&P A FORMER US-OWNED AND NOW MAJORITY FILIPINO-OWNED CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, HAS BID ON A MIDDLE EAST CONTRACT. THE STATUS OF THE BID IS UNKNOWN.

6. COMMENT: THERE ARE VERY REAL PROBLEMS AFFECTING ALL OVERSEAS WORKERS (SEE REFTTEL), THAT SERVE TO

INHIBIT THE OTHERWISE SKILLED AND INDUSTRIOUS OVERSEAS
FILIPINO. IT HAS LONG BEEN THE PRACTICE OF AMERICAN
CONTRACTORS TO PROVIDE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SPECIALISTS
TO LOOK AFTER THE JOB-RELATED PROBLEMS OF ALL WORKERS,
AMERICAN AND FOREIGN. THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT
SOCIAL WORKERS COULD PLAY A USEFUL ROLE WITH WORKERS
SEPARATED FROM THEIR FAMILIES. THE QUESTION SEEMS TO
BE WHO SHOULD PROVIDE THE SOCIAL WORKER AND HOW SHOULD
THESE JOBS BE FUNDED? COUNSELING A WORKER SUFFERING
FROM CULTURAL SHOCK CAN GET INTO SENSITIVE PERSONAL
PROBLEMS. WHO WILL THE WORKER TRUST - A SOCIAL WORKER
PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTOR OR ONE PROVIDED BY THE
WORKER'S HOME GOVERNMENT? PERHAPS WHEN THIS PROBLEM IS
THOROUGHLY DEBATED WITH THE CONTRACTORS, ANOTHER SOLU-
TION TO THE PROBLEM WILL BE FOUND.

7. GIVEN THE CONTROL THE DOL HAS ON FILIPINO WORKERS
GOING OVERSEAS, IT APPEARS THAT SOME COMPETITIVE BIDS
COULD BE PUT TOGETHER BY FILIPINO CONTRACTORS WHO BID
ON FOREIGN LABOR CONTRACTS.
SULLIVAN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, FOREIGN WORKERS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MANILA13470
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760333-0670
From: MANILA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760998/aaaadftu.tel
Line Count: 136
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 DHAHRAN 1008
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <20 AUG 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PHILIPPINE OVERSEAS WORKERS WELFARE FUND
TAGS: EALR, EFIN, ELAB, SA, RP
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006